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The transition

Haig loath to resume Cuba ties

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WASHINGTON — Alexander M. Haig said yesterday that he would not support the restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba "just so long as they are spawning, instigating, manning and conducting terrorist activities in this hemisphere."

But the secretary of state-designate declined to say whether he favored the re-establishment of official ties with Taiwan. That is an issue, he said, that he needs to discuss "at some length" with President-elect Ronald Reagan.

Haig also sidestepped questions over a possible reshaping of policies toward Nicaragua and El Salvador as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee resumed its confirmation hearing on his appointment. He spent a full day before the panel Friday.

Haig did not elaborate on what he termed Cuban terrorist activities. U.S. officials have said there has been Cuban support for leftist groups

in both Nicaragua and El Salvador, though they have not publicly spelled out the extent.

The retired general, a former NATO commander, stressed anew his warning that the United States faces a dangerous period of challenge by the Soviet Union around the globe. But while Soviet communism poses a military threat, he said, "we are not facing inevitable, inexorable supremacy of Marxist-Leninism as a system."

On the contrary, he went on, that system "is a profound historical failure."

"If we get our act together and move in concert to manage this very dangerous period," Haig declared, "at the far end of the decade or more I think we're facing a period of utmost opportunity."

Haig was asked, in light of his repeated call for boosting U.S. military strength, whether there had been recent cases in which America should have employed force but did not. "In no particular place, no," he replied.

In response to lengthy questioning by Sen. Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.), Haig acknowledged that officials of the Nixon administration had violated the spirit of the charter of the Organization of American States by working covertly to overthrow the Marxist government of President Salvador Allende of Chile.

Haig said a day earlier, however, that he personally "was not deeply involved in either overt or covert policies" toward Chile.

He told Tsongas yesterday that American actions at the time should be viewed in the context of "countervailing pressures and imperatives" but said new laws and regulations should prevent a recurrence of such an episode.

Nonetheless, he added, the United States should not be bound by a "rigid, legalistic pre-occupation" against intelligence operations needed to protect the national interest.

Last fall — while his running mate, George Bush, was in Peking assuring the Chinese that the Republican team had no intention of abrogating the conditions for continued full relations with that country — Reagan said he wanted to rebuild an official link between the United States and Taiwan. Diplomatic relations between them were broken when U.S. ties with China were resumed in January 1979.

The contradiction proved an embarrassment to the campaign, though Reagan later declared that he intended no steps that would imperil the growing U.S.-China relationship. The United States formally dropped its "official" mission to Taiwan when it exchanged ambassadors with Peking, which long has insisted there cannot be two Chinas.

Asked by Sen. Paul Sarbanes (R-Md.) if he favored a return to an official U.S.-Taiwan link, Haig replied, "I think it is very important that I have an opportunity to discuss that issue with the president-elect at some length before I go on the public record with respect to that."